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HAWA

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COLLEGE OF IMAGING ARTS AND SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF FILM AND ANIMATION

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

JULY, 2013

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PREFACE

Producing my second year film, *This African/American Dream*, I met a large number of African immigrants from different walks of life who shared their stories with me. This was a great source of inspiration for *Hawa*, and I thank them all.

Near the end our second year in the Film and Animation program, we had to not only decide what we would spend our thesis year working on, but also with whom we would be working. As excited as I was to take command of my thesis ship, I realized I was going to wear many hats during this final crusade toward my MFA. So I reconciled myself to the idea that it was up to me to make my own luck.

Soon after I started to get things going, my luck began. I received multiple favors and offers of help. Mr. Best Batchateu was one of the first. He gave me a tremendous amount of support, introducing me to new people and expanding my circle of possibilities. Mr. Moka Lanthum and Ms. Terry Chaka from the Baobab Cultural Center, allies since the first hour, helped me connect with the African immigrant community in Rochester. I needed to find a world in which I already knew the way most social codes worked, and the Baobab Cultural Center turned out to be the ideal way for me to connect with the people I wanted to chronicle in my movie.

My “A-team,” director of photography Thomas Atwell, first and second assistant directors Mathew Spaul and Serge Armel Sawadogo, and unit production manager Kenton Cummings, took the making of my film at heart and became its core. Working late into the

nights they analyzed each new challenge and found solutions to assure the production kept moving forward. There was also a fantastic flow of undergraduate and graduate students who just wanted to help, and saved us from running short on crew, as it is often the case on student films. The production designer and makeup artist Lynn Catalano, who very generously took time from her busy schedule to help raise the production value of the film, was another of the many blessings that poured into this project.

I would like to acknowledge all of my professors during my three years at RIT. I thank my thesis committee members, Howard Lester and Brian Larson, who believed in me from the beginning and gave me the best advice for achieving my goals. And a special thank you goes to my thesis chair, Peter Kiwitt, for the privilege of being his student, employee, and mentee. Learning from him, I grew tremendously in my overall approach to filmmaking.

In addition, I must express my deepest gratitude to my parents, brothers, and sisters in Burkina Faso and France. You have blessed me with abundant support, financially and morally. Your encouragement pulled me back and kept me going. Mom, Dad, Nene, Olivier, Nongdo, Claudine, Kevin, thank you.

To my fellow classmates I say thank you for three years of consistently fertilizing my creativity and motivating me to out-of-the-box thinking.

Finally, to my best friend, the love of my life, I say thank you. Thank you for sharing the dream and walking the talk with me from the first day. Like in everything I do, you were my inspiration for *Hawa*; and you, more than anybody else, made all this possible. “Je t’aime.”

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ABSTRACT

The graduate thesis film *Hawa* is a 29-minute drama about an immigrant African couple in the grip of their “American-dream” and mutual disillusion. When Hawa realizes having a baby is no longer a priority for her husband, she starts questioning the meaning of their ten years of marriage and, most importantly, what is in it for her. She eventually finds herself caught between the old Hawa, the typical African woman swearing by her husband’s name, and a new Hawa, westernized and independent.

The film was shot on the Red One MX camera in 4K with Zeiss lenses, and edited entirely on Premiere Pro CS6. Color grading was done on DaVinci Resolve 9, and the mix was done on Protools 9.

This paper discusses the thought processes, goals, and legwork of making the film from its conception until its first screening at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

GENESIS

About the Author

I was born and raised in Burkina Faso, an inland country in the heart of West Africa. I am the youngest of my parent's five children. Most of the time my dad was gone, touring with his theatre company. But he always managed to take one of us with him. I have to say I was chosen more than my share. So very young, and yet I was exposed to the world of art, props, makeup, rehearsals, etc. I did not have many toys but when I was inside the prop room I had nothing to envy even the richest boy in the neighborhood. My imagination would just escape and take me places nobody else could go. I was somehow already planting seeds in the right side of my brain.

I really enjoyed watching my Dad rehearse his actors and give them directions in French or other local dialects, to connect more efficiently with them. One day, he put me in one of his plays that was being turned into a telefilm. My first film set, at five of age. Twenty-five years later, I am in America, directing my own film. Paulo Coelho would say, "It's written."

Another line that could have been written is that I am now married, and use my own experiences to write stories. Since sixth grade I have always been involved in artistic groups doing dance here, theatre or music there. I just loved it. Then high school came and like anybody else I had to decide what I was going to do with my life. I already wanted to break into the movie industry, to work with image and sound and people. For most of my classmates at the military school, Prytanee Militaire de Kadiogo, continuing in the military was the normal thing to do. But for me, I wanted total freedom in art and creativity. So I chose to keep the artist instead of the military. Because there was no local film school at that time, I did four years of computer science, first in Burkina Faso then in France. When I

returned home with my degree, a film school had just opened and I instantly enrolled. I would finally learn filmmaking.

Everything was going great until I met a friend from New York who was researching and filming on African masks. He told me he was a Fulbright student and was receiving funding to study. He tried to explain how the grant worked but between him shoveling his French and me swallowing my English we never finished the subject. A few years later he went back to America without us ever talking about it again. I was already active in the media world in Burkina Faso, shooting commercials and short movies here and there when I was not building websites or browsing 3D tutorials online. One day when I was filming at the US embassy, I met a lady with whom I discussed movies. When she asked if I ever thought about going to Hollywood or at least being exposed to what makes that industry the number one in the world, she mentioned something about the prestigious Fulbright grant. This time her French was better and my English was good enough to be conversational. I asked her to tell me all she knew about the program. The next day I was back at the embassy and filled out an application. It took about one year of screening and interviews before I received a call congratulating me for winning the Fulbright scholarship. The voice explained I needed to be in Chicago three weeks later and they gave me details on what to do next. The excitement subsided a little when from behind me my wife asked: "What is this?" She did not know much about it, except that I had a dream. How to tell her the news, when we were just newly married with a two year old daughter? It was not easy but she eventually agreed to let me go.

This is how I arrived at the Rochester Institute of Technology to pursue my Master in Fine Arts in Film and Animation. The blessing was completed when one year later, my wife and daughter joined me in Rochester. The quest for higher education, first in France and then in America, led my family and me to relocate and immerse ourselves in a highly attractive western world. We did not yet realize how it

would impact our lives as a married couple. The more we were seduced by the American way of life, the more challenges we had to face to adjust to each other's change.

Writing "Hawa" out of my African and American experiences

When it comes to African couples immigrating to the USA, from what I have personally seen, about seven in ten end up breaking up after a few years. There are many reasons for this but a common denominator is that the change often requires a true transformation of one's inner values—holding onto some and letting go of others—and not every person is ready for this. A typical example is how a husband and wife in Africa barely show outward expressions of tenderness or open emotions to each other, especially outside of their bedroom. Coming here, you are expected to show signs of your relationship to your loved ones or you might be seen as cold and distant. A light-hearted view on this is: It is 10:30 pm. The husband in the UK says to his wife, "Sleep tight, my love!" The husband in France says to his wife, "Sweet dreams, sweet heart!" In America, "Good night, honey!" In Africa, "Did you double check the doors are locked?"

Obviously, my parents and the community I grew up fostered my sense of societal norms but my cultural background also comes from my exposure to other communities and my need to create my own world. So coming back to expressiveness and tenderness in marriage, I believe it is a necessary ingredient to keep a couple together. A mutual caring love that expresses itself brings the warmth that ignites a husband and wife's desire to keep the relationship alive. From where I come things are implied, assumed. Particularly in the villages, where people are not as exposed to the west as in the cities, a husband and wife would never walk hand-in-hand in the street, nor hug. In fact, there is always a certain distance between them. The husband would be hurrying ten feet in front of his wife. The wife would find her place in the corner of the house and let her husband talk, etc. Not necessarily that she does not

have a voice or does not count, but because she knows when and where she would be better heard. We sometimes call it respect, sometimes submission. But for her it is natural. It is her culture.

In the relationships I have heard about or witnessed myself, what is sad to me is that couples come here looking for a better life but end up breaking apart. Instead of a strengthened marriage we see strengthened individualism. Women get new privileges while their husbands lose many. Motherhood is a good example. In African culture, a woman who has not given birth to a child in marriage is strongly reproached by her society and family. Plus, she has nothing that could distract her from a boring marital relationship. In the USA, the African woman can relax that stranglehold around her neck and allow change to take her to her full potential.

On the other hand, a husband who is used to being a true king, with a wife always there to serve, finds himself learning how to serve himself instead. I have heard men confess their parents would come after them if they dared step in the kitchen, because it is supposed to be a woman's territory. Now in the USA when the wife goes to work, he has to cook himself, wash the kids himself, etc. Not all men are ready to go through such transformation and, sure enough, turn it against the spouse. These everyday behavioral changes do not stop there. They follow into the bedroom.

Considering the stereotype of the African man being "cold" or, in other words, inexpressive when it comes to emotion, there are a few interesting elements to analyze. A man who is used to being careless in regards to intimacy with his spouse can no longer walk out the door without taking the risk that his wife will look outside the marriage for what she is lacking inside. However, because both the husband and wife were raised a certain way, they both wear masks that hide their emotions. They end up looking at each other like perfect strangers, not knowing what to do or simply waiting for the other to take the first step. You would be surprised how sometimes a wife would dare to complain about not receiving any tenderness, when she herself does not know how to give or be tender. That frustration

might be subconsciously originating from the conventional and religiously inspired idea that sex is a marital duty. As such, one can see it as another sign of subordination of females to males. We can easily agree with Rachel Spronk¹ that “sex makes you feel good, happy, alive, in love, sexy, loved, strong,” yet the first scene of *Hawa* shows us the exact opposite. It is cold and passionless, ruthless selfishness on one side, tasteless submission on the other.

All these thoughts, reflections, and concerns led me to create a movie that explores these subjects. There was no intention to give definitive answers; rather the goal was to start a conversation about that which I became aware of as a result of my own experiences.

¹ Rachel Spronk: *Sexuality in Africa*, Vol. 4 No. 3, “Beyond Pain, Toward Pleasure.”

BEYOND THE FILM

The importance of making a film like *Hawa*

Creating *Hawa*, I kept in mind the image of my grandmother: conservative, centered on serving and meeting the needs of her husband and children, taking care of the home, getting the food and cooking meals. In most of Africa, even though women have modernized as many joined the outside work force, they must still be the one to take care of the household responsibilities. *Hawa* portrays that image, and shows that her burden has not diminished but rather increased with modernization.

My personal exposure to western culture also expanded my worldview. As my wife and I are experiencing cultural differences, we are both changing, integrating into a modern society's culture. And more change is sure to come. This makes me wonder how it will influence my wife and children and even me. In writing *Hawa* I created a trial to find the right balance between a traditional wife in total submission to her husband and a necessary change. Will these changes make the marriage stronger or shatter it? *Hawa* means Eve (in reference to Adam and Eve) and, as such, there is a forbidden factor, an invisible question suggested throughout the movie: what will happen if the line is ever crossed?

The story is me questioning what is necessary for healthy change from the traditional. Through my experience and concerns for my wife, children, marriage, I have brought some personal fears into the writing of *Hawa*. My family and I are transitioning out of African tradition and into western influences...and we are in the middle of something, going somewhere...uncertain of what will unfold in life for us. The only thing that is not confused is where we are coming from. I know I am creating my own world, and in so doing there is a cost...what is it? Perhaps this goes with remembering to educate the heart as well the mind. Will the necessity to prioritize what matters most in life prevent material gain from becoming a passion? How long can we hold on to traditions? *Hawa's* husband, Kader could be anybody, me included, who refuses to see the world like it really is and therefore misses a chance to

adapt and gives up. The choice of the medical problem making him incapable of having a baby can be perceived as a form of castration: taking away his strength, his manhood—a little bit like being powerless before an established system.

As a filmmaker, I make movies based on what my eyes see, and my face gets slapped by I have seen it. I have seen couples self-destruct because of materialism, selfish ambitions, women incapable of freeing themselves from a dying authoritarian husband, men thrown in jail by greedy wives, laws written to protect criminals, moral values perverted, wives gone evil because of money, etc. When somebody slaps you in the face, you don't think whether you should cry or not, you cry very loud and then you hold your chin. In this case, the world was too big to hear me well, so I wrote *Hawa*.

The language factor

Once again I used the reality around me to create the world of *Hawa*. Right from the beginning, I wanted the characters to be of the same fabric as the real world of African immigrant. Part of it implied the ability to speak multiple languages. Because of the subject matter, English, French, and Cameroonian pidgin are all spoken in the movie. English because the story happens in America and the characters have to appropriate that language themselves in order to communicate or do business with others. French because it is my primary language, and represents the language everybody uses in the main character's home country. It is also the language spoken in the cities, the colonial language that only people who went to school learned to speak, write and read. The third language is the Cameroonian pidgin spoken in small groups; it represents the ethnic group dialect. That third dimension informs on the roots, and lineage of the characters. It is like a code that only initiated people can decode. The need to relate to African immigrants made me decide to combine these three different languages.

Of course these choices had direct constraints on who would be available as actors. Understand that it is not as easy to find black actors speaking fluent French particularly when living in a city like Rochester. The main characters to assure more credibility needed to be from the same origin or close. In other terms, if *Hawa* was from Burkina Faso, then I wanted her husband to be from Burkina Faso as well. The third main character of the movie, Jonas who is the representation of the African immigrant well integrated into western civilization, presents himself as coming from Brooklyn. He is the light *Hawa* misses, and the exact opposite of her husband Kader.

CONNECTING TO THE REAL WORLD

Pascal Atuma the big brother

I met Pascal Atuma back in 2010, as we were both invited for a radio talk show organized in support of the Black Harvest Film Festival. He was there with a new film and after the talk we exchanged contact information. I told him I would make a movie with him at the end of my training. So when the time came to produce my thesis film, I sent him the script and he liked it. I initially wanted him as a guest just for a quick appearance but he wanted something more substantial. I rewrote the script and incorporated a new character, Jonas, just for him.

The decision to go for Pascal was first motivated by the will to touch on real world practices. I wanted to associate his name to the project and by doing so open more doors for the movie. I was well aware that in this business, let's be blunt about it, it is less what you have or possess than who you know. I understood that quickly and did everything possible to have him come to Rochester for half a week. Now, the entire timeline had to be rearranged to fit his busy schedule.

The part he was playing required dancing salsa. He knew it and had started taking some classes in Los Angeles, California where he lives. But it was not enough, so we decided we should hire a professional salsa dancer to provide accelerated training. He needed to have a daily schedule, to confirm payment with his agent, and some rehearsal time with me. All these requirements put more weight on my shoulders, since I was producing as well as directing. I learned how to do that.

Today Pascal is a big brother who revealed himself to be a generous person. He shared many stories, tips, and advice that helped during the production and still do. He considers me as one of his mentees and that's a true honor for me. I can call him anytime, and he will always make sure to either answer my question or direct me on how and where to find a solution.

FROM THE MIND TO THE SCREEN

The passion is not enough, you need the business component

Producing the movie *Hawa* took faith and courage, and the process of creating *Hawa* itself taught me a lot. Many of my life exposures and personal fears have surfaced in creating *Hawa*. The influence of western civilization evolved the way I see women's role; more so now than when I was in Africa. As an advocate for women to develop into their full potential, I wonder now what from this new world is healthy and important to incorporate and what should be left out of our lives. In creating *Hawa*, I wanted to recognize and pay attention to the influence of America on me and my wife, and ultimately on our marriage and family. Even though *Hawa* is just a story, it amplifies my hidden interrogations on the type of sacrifice one might face in the quest of a better life.

In producing *Hawa*, everything was a very hard road. Limited family help, leaning on one person's stipend for support was difficult. My wife understood and cooperated in all the hardship; she was there and helped a lot to make it work. It was not easy, but, the dream was big enough, and so we kept on with it.

I kept coming to school daily and saw moral and financial help my fellow classmates seemed to benefit from somewhere I did not know. Even if I felt things seemed easier for others I didn't complain because I was already very happy about my situation. Certainly I wanted to do something that was significant for my film, something to be proud to have done. I had that in mind. I was wondering if I was going to do something simple or what. I was doing a lot of praying asking God to help me. One day after a festival in Buffalo, I shared with a woman I met there, and of course I had to talk about *Hawa* to anyone who was getting close to me. After listening to my pitch she looked me in the eyes and said "Hey, if you need help, come here, there is nothing we could not help you to get. You are Terry's friend

so you are family.” I did not know how she would help and what she could do but it did not matter at that point, what she just did started the machine - right there. I had no more fear. I saw this as an answer to prayer. Fear was really what was holding me. I was only afraid of failure. But now, with no more fear, my brain could think clearly and it brought the rest of me to act on getting it done.

I did everything I could. I asked people, even those who had never heard about me or cared about me. I wrote a long letter to the Fulbright Program explaining why I need that extra money for this and that. I called friends, and really set up fund raising system to make sure I was getting the right resources to handle this project. Sure enough I started to get positive answers. It didn't take long, I had enough to handle the work and do a decent job. That took my fearlessness to another level; there was nothing that was going to stop me now, because I was able to secure the basic needs.

Next, I wrote the entire project's creative and business plan. I articulated my plans and sent out more literature and got positive feedback with more help coming in. I was thinking more strategically, thinking what to plan and how I to do things.

I Lived Hawa everyday all day; I ate with her, I slept with her, I spoke with her on the phone, in my car, waiting at the dentist, you name it. She was with me everywhere. All the characters stayed with me every day. That is how I was able to write Hawa; all the characters were part of my life. My successes, my failures, my emotions became one with Hawa. I knew the story would grow as this project took off, so I was not too concerned about perfecting the screen play. I was more interested in the people that I was going to involve in this project. I was getting more interested in that because the outcome in the aftermath of everything was what mattered to me at the time. As I was bringing people in, I was more interested in the relationships, and in the experience and knowledge. I was excited about the new opportunities and possibilities that were going to open because of this project.

It is through this process that Pascal Atuma came back to mind. Nothing happens for free. When his agent called me, we discussed pricing and it turned out I could not handle the overall cost. I thought a moment, is this worth it? Paying three times the total estimated budget for one actor? This is maybe not going to be possible because the professional fee, airline, hotel, food and film rights that Pascal's agent demanded was too much for me to handle. But see, I had to enter into the real world and test myself. So I decided to stretch my thinking and get into the pricing. I needed to understand this is how it is. I had to be professional and this was part of the edict of me becoming professional. I learned right there that I have to pay the right price for things.

So I did what I had to do, I sent more business plans and financial request out, talked to more people. Eventually I got people willing to help. I got a very good sponsor who took on half of Pascal's costs, air fare and some basic expenses immediately and he promised to cover the rest later. I knew I was getting somewhere now. I knew I had started to get the machine running and it was going to be very beneficial for me at the end.

When you get into that preproduction mode, you just want to secure things, secure the right people. At this time a good friend of mine back home who is a filmmaker too, called me. He informed me he was coming to the United States. So I asked him if he wanted to work with me on *Hawa*. He agreed. That meant a lot to me and gave me more strength to handle the pressure and challenges the professionals present. This came right in time

Being a producer, you have to be strategic, and identify quickly what you can work with. I knew 90% of my crew was going to be students. Because of my schooling and family I really didn't mingle with too many people. Yet I took the time to develop a good relationship with good amount of people in school and out of school, with some who were undergrads also. But when the time came for me to hire crew members, everyone was already busy doing shoots on different projects. Because of the amount of

time it took me to secure the money part and everything, I was late in securing these people and certain equipment as well. Wondering what to do to attract people to work on my project, I remembered someone I had pitched the movie to while I was seeking help a few months earlier. He was very impressed and excited to help and said if I ever needed any help I should just come and let him know. I remembered particularly they had a Red One Camera. With a Red Camera, I would attract everyone to work on Hawa. Bingo! This was the solution!

I went back to the TV station and asked for the Red Camera. He said yes! But before the camera was released in my care, I had to provide sufficient liability insurance. So my mind took off again. Another friend, who I had made associate producer, held a two million dollar insurance liability through his company. He talked to his insurance people and they issued a liability certificate for the RED and that's how we got that in the bag. Now, my approach was much different getting a crew to work for me. I announced, "Do you want to work with a Red Camera?" The first day of the filming, I had 20-30 people there who were busy working! I learned through all this there is nothing that cannot find a solution. You just have thought long enough.

When we passed that step, the last minute change of the lead actress playing Hawa dropped like a bomb. Yes, days before I started filming the lead actress announced her boyfriend was jealous and he did not want her to work on the film. This after her boyfriend himself had called me threatening me. Even though she had spent the past two months taking lessons, rehearsing every single week with a professional salsa coach. The lead actress dropping was very disappointing, very, and hard to take. It was like that entire day the world just collapsed on me. I did not know what to do... Pascal was arriving from L.A., the camera and everybody available on the project were committed. There was no way I could change the timeline of this project. I had to find ways to make it up.

Immediately I began looking for a replacement. Two days before the filming begins I convinced a good friend of mine, and she agreed to play the part of Hawa. She had never acted before nor danced salsa, but she spoke French and knew some Cameroonian pidgin. I just had to believe this lady was another God-sent solution. I decided not to think of what she couldn't do, but what she could become. As long as she agreed to take the journey with me, I was not afraid she was not ready. The entire cast, except for Pascal, was composed of non-professional actors. I was not worried about them because I was going to use their reality, who they were, their real background and put that in service into the movie making. As the new Hawa came forward, I was planning on using only the good takes. I was relieved she refused to do only one thing in the to script. I compromised the script and got the shot I needed.

What was really good about my new Hawa is that she was willing to participate and help. That was the only thing I knew of her and needed to work her role. Because she had that attitude, everything else was positive. When you have people in your life that have that intention, that good will, that's all you need to be in front of the camera. I worked with her as a human being, she had history, reality, realizing she then could relate to some of the things I tell her; that's what I wanted from all my actors. Sure enough, the first shot I was very excited, knowing she was going to give me something because the camera liked her. The camera liked her, the camera liked Pascal, and I had a good dynamic going on.

The cast and crew were positive, with everyone willing and ready to work and help. Everything else was up to me now because we had the initial requirements for the production to be conducted successfully. Weighing on me was whether I could handle the turns in the road Hawa was going to show us.

Sure enough at the end of the first weekend of filming, Monday at 6am, as I brought Pascal to his hotel to gather his belongings and drove him to the airport, a bad turn happened. I was approached

by my production manager. He called and said, "Hey, I can't do this anymore. This is not organized enough, I cannot work like this. So I am going to need all the papers and the truck picked up, it's in my parking lot, call me when you get here." And I thought everything was good! I didn't talk and went to pick up all the files. I returned the truck myself, doing what I had to do. I went home very tired but had a good feeling from all this and knew this was good, I did "ok"; I just had to stay focused and keep everything moving. Two days later, I met him; sat down and asked him if we could talk a little about what the problem was. He had his reasons. Much was that he felt insulted about being talked to in a manner that he did not like and doing craft service and cleanup and other such things. He didn't understand this is the situation on the set. You either have the experience or not. He didn't have the experience so he didn't know. I told him I understand and apologized, telling him I was not going to talk to him like that anymore. But I also let him know he was missing a great opportunity to learn a lot of things through this filming. I offered him to remain, realizing this is human nature, and that now that we had talked we had an understanding. He said "Okay" and he came back on the project working harder. I knew how to manage him after that.

Other issues came up after that, vacation problems, scheduling problems, even with the lead actress. I was very delicate with her because she was the main character and I did not want to lose her at all. I was doing everything in my power to make her feel valued. One scene it was late and we were cranky, I initially had a rosary that I wanted her to pray with and she refused to hold the rosary. This was a real shock to me because everything we were doing was of course acted! She needed to tell me that because it was important to her. It was hard to understand, but I didn't want to take the time to try to get her to work with me. Giving her respect I just directed her to put it next to her as she prayed. She went along with this.

A lot of issues came up during the filming and I learned to just be a director. In other words dealing with people on set and getting them to agree to do their work. A lot of that depends on how you listen to people on set and how you talk to them in order to get them to agree to do what you wish them to do. And it does not matter if you are professional or nonprofessional, on a payroll or just volunteering; as a director I am ready to negotiate when possible or compromise if necessary. The one thing that matters most as a director is I must incorporate the situation into the flow and keep the show going. This is directing, and you don't learn this in the classrooms.

Thank God I wasn't alone to handle the pressure. I was able to do a lot because of the other people who came to support the filming. Having the A Team formed (the director, the two assistant directors, the unit project manager and the production designer) involved trusting others. We talked about the elements we needed to take into account each time: what's ideal, what's practical and what's feasible. I learned to team work and trust others to get things accomplished. I enjoyed not having to worry, knowing it was being taken care of. I also enjoyed seeing how the team comes into play and experiencing the wealth individual skills produce. One person I knew little of was the production designer. Yet she turned out to be of amazing talent and experience. She saw things I never saw or new about while going over the script. She brought forth the magic to making everything work together. One thing I noticed right away was that she had that second thought right after the first thought giving multiple dimensions of ongoing creative direction. I loved working with her and learning from her as well as everybody else that got involved with her.

Valuable lessons I learned are:

- Unless you have that team formed to do their work in creating the movie, you are not set for success. As a team we came together to figure out what would work best for the project. We met on

terms of what is ideal, what's practical and what is feasible, three elements that we needed to take into account every step of the way.

- The need to step out from being the writer into the director role to connect with the actors and crew, bringing them into the story.
- The value of having some people to work with you to give you stability. My friend Serge came in to work on Hawa just to be there for me. He wanted the best for me and did whatever was needed so I could do my best. This added much needed strength emotionally as well in counsel and in deeds.

POST PRODUCTION: NEW BEGINNING

Editing: Finding the movie we shot

Starting the post production was another giant task in itself. I initially wanted to have an editor for the movie, just because I wanted to bring some distance between myself and the movie. I thought this would allow me to have a second opinion, second eyes to critique the work. I sure like to work hard, but I like company. So I looked for someone who could edit. I found an undergrad colleague who was well educated, intelligent and dedicated.

Because I was still looking for the film we had shot I did not want to risk not exploring everything that I could explore with the movie. That required an extra amount of work to do in editing; creating multiple versions. My assistant editor had vacation time coming and I wanted her to possess this project and do her best. But I realized she was only volunteering, there are limitations to what you can ask people to do. I learned that I could not ask everything and that I would have to do much of this myself. Luckily, I knew I had the right skills for that task.

With no doubt, this step of the creation of HAWA was the most challenging. It took me about four different drafts to cut the very first rough draft from eighty seven minutes to twenty seven minutes. Looking at the material in the timeline, I realized it was indispensable for me to make sure I was staying true to my original story, but at the same time to allow some growth and restructuring of the story. Talking about “Story”, a few things I learned working with Professor Kiwitt were to first keep things simple and organized, second, keep in mind to shorten up things for their maximum effects (start late, end early etc.)

I learned this during the four months we spent together refining the cuts, speeding up actions here, slowing down there, flip flopping images in other cases to better control the flow of emotions.

Professor Kiwitt impacted me and my filmmaking in so many ways. He taught me thinking twice about things is not enough. You need to think as many times as needed until you cannot do better. But the lessons were also in how I had to refrain from my own convictions to become a block and allow external inputs to enrich my internal ambitions and desires for the movie. This explains in part why I ended up with seventeen iterations or cuts. Most student project barely reach version five.

The movie I wrote and the movie I shot are two different things. I used what I had and made the best out of it. This is a working process of letting go of the old story by not helming that too much; but using what you shot, the screen play as it goes in your mind. The screenplay is still a ghost; it's shadowing you, enabling you to see things.

After the fourth cut, I knew where the movie was going to go. Everything else was a matter of refining some cuts and deciding to keep that structure or not. One heavy part of editing was how to restructure. I needed to reconsider some things; what was important, and what I was trying to say or the message. I found it is really true you cut the movie three times. You cut it first time on the screen play, the second time on the production, and, the third on the time line. I found on the third cut I was rewriting the movie.

The decision to edit HAWA using the video editing software PREMIERE PRO CS6 came out of my prior experience with adobe products in general, but also from the fact that PREMIERE CS6 allowed me to edit R3D² files much more efficiently using the CUDDA technology which accelerates rendering and processing time. Plus, using the student package and renting the complete collection every month made it affordable for me. I also acquired a custom built workstation that was fast and had about thirty two gigabytes worth of memory. It really made the difference to have a reliable workstation that was not taking forever processing 4K RAW footage from the RED ONE.

² RED ONE files extension

Color Grading HAWA

After editing and picture locking the film, I took another journey. I learned the grading process. After production my colorist left for California with the hard drive. We were communicating through Skype and emails, “dropboxing³” some shots back and forth. I found that much like an actor or a composer, using poetic words trying to provoke emotions helped direct the colorist to set the atmosphere to inspire others into Hawa’s story works only in certain cases. At every point, direction is needed to inspire others to unleash their creativity. I had to learn a little bit of what matters to my colorist in the grading process; what he offers first, what he feels and how he reacts. I realized it is not only about technology tools, it is the emotion. Everything is based on emotion. Another great valuable lesson learned.

The sound track

I met my composer in a class I was assisting professor Kiwitt in. He sent me a few cues he had done in the past, and I knew once again, that what would determine the success of our collaboration was how committed he would be. The first part of our collaboration composed in me discussing emotions and feelings and out of the box thinking to better fit what was going on the screen. He then wrote a few cues based on my directions and the screenplay I gave him, and I used them to start building the emotional line and most importantly to establish the complementarity image and sound would entertain together.

Later when the movie got picture locked, he was able to work on the entire soundtrack. It was an exciting experience working with Stephen in general. Hard worker and talented, he always gave a hundred percent in the cues he proposed. I reconsidered a few choices based on some new emotions

³ Exchanging files through the online storage platform dropbox

his cues brought, and suggested a few change here and there on certain other cues. I had my mother record a lullaby she used to sing to me and incorporated it in the scene with the fertility doll.. In total over ten cues were written exclusively for the movie.

Stephen and I agreed on a contract, contract that taught me a lot on what I will be or will not be able to do using the songs written by my composer. Composing the sound track is the last big part in the post production aspect.. Steven liked the project a lot and he took upon himself to build the entire original score. I tried to set up a way of talking about what I wanted from him in poetic words to activate creativity. Such as, "For the first part of this, it is about hope. Think about sadness that's all". It worked for the most part, but I found out sadness for me does not mean the same sadness for him. Writing a lot of the cues was a lot of work for him. His patience, his dedication and hard work was exceptional.

We had one interesting situation where I wanted to have two sequences where there was no music but chanting voices. Stephen gave me feedback on why we shouldn't do this. He is the scholar and I needed to listen to what he was saying and take his advice. I was a little hesitant whether I should keep or not keep the chanting. He did a beautiful job in writing cues for these parts. I was very tempted not to use the chanting. In the end, I ended up going 50/50. Wanting this approach I took away one and kept one just because it was fair. Understanding he is a scholar and he had confidence in himself and I wanted to believe he was just being objective. I also sensed that being a scholar, Stephen was a little worried that everything done under him was to represent his supervision. I compromised and even today I wonder if that was the right thing to do. While still in my exploration mode, it made it hard for my instinct to stay complete. I allowed other ways to come in and by doing so, might have missed to stand my point, especially when I am certain of what I am hearing and perceiving for certain sequences. I see my fault line in that I compromise a little when in conflict or when I feel I am under someone who is also talented and knowledgeable. On another note, it is not about getting things done my way; it is getting that team developed around me to get it done through understanding the vision within me. This

develops through relationship and communication; in time the team knows me and perceives how I like things accomplished as they execute the work with me.

Upon completion to the score, I had to sign a contract. Here again, It was me learning to honor original work. In signing the contract I cut short my rights to use the movie as I like. My movie inspired the score. Nothing was composed out of the void yet the contract has total control in what I can do with the music written for HAWA. Had I paid for the score, I would have surely brought some changes to some of the clauses in the contract. I learned the importance of a good lawyer and executive producer for future projects.

The Sound Design

Sound design is an intricate part of editing. How you use sound complementarity with images was very new and interesting to do. I learned a lot and understood everything is a step, building upon, layering. I worked hard in sound design, with a lot of sleepless nights editing. Much of the sound work I did myself because I didn't have someone to do it. On a student driven project, it is not a surprise, however, when you find at any time help drops off. It really hurts but you have to deal with it. I had to make an effort not to take it personally after experiencing anger many times. My mixer left me a few times slowing down a few things. I kept positive to keep my energy from going down and form the situation into something positive. This was my way to deal with things through the whole project, to stay positive and keep from slowing down from things I didn't count on happening.

The Mix

After I was done designing the sound Maria Yepes brought the final touches in PRO TOOLS to make sure all the levels were right. She did a great job, and made herself available for the completion of the mix. From the entire project, that last step required less creativity, but a lot of vigilance and

attention not to miss one single sound that is not at the right place or at the right level. The finishing sound touches add credibility in sound value to the moving picture creating a flawless marriage of sound and picture unison. I am grateful to Maria for her abilities.

CLOSING REMARKS

While the final stage of this thesis film is distribution and screening formatting, I'm feeling very content with the work and the approach I took to the story line and post production. Now that post production is complete the movie is ready to exhibit. I am wondering what the career of this film will be, and how will *Hawa* be received. Today the new thing is to screen in full 4K resolution and it so happens that we shot in 4K with the Red camera. That gives opportunity to go full blown industry standards and full blown from the beginning to end for what is done in Hollywood. People are working now with DCP files and DI and less and less with film. That is why I thought this is another opportunity to go through and knowing this to be a vanguard for getting there. I would have already gained the experience of how it is done. I came into knowing the terms and what requirements are to be met so I could think of the end and how to get there before I start the filming process.

I look forward to having a premiere for this project where I could officially say thank you to everybody for this is very important to me personally. I would like to bring that well deserved spot light on those who contributed on this project. It is important, but it is also business, a business attitude. Inviting VIPs to the premiere will bring attention to the work itself and to those who were a part of the film process. This is how your name is heard, and, how people call you to do business. All this is part of the game and part of the journey in being a filmmaker.

Having a premiere is also putting in application what Pascal taught me on the set. He said to me: "Right now as a student, everything you do is passion driven. But soon when you get out there, you'll have to put t the business side of things and enter the game. Because if you do not have the business side involved in everything you do, you will not sustain your passion". I am keeping this council in mind and activating it.

Perspectives

When you talk about business, you talk about markets, exposure, distribution and more. The thing that definitely has leverage in *Hawa* is Pascal. He is a star in Nollywood, he is known in Hollywood. Because of the market in Nollywood, there are lots of possibilities out there to do something. I think about how to use that experience in making *Hawa* turn into a business advantage that I can use to grow for new projects. Currently, I am working on this, securing the necessities for the movie to go anywhere in the world having the DCP format, and all the different formats to do the premiere and bring a little bit of exposure to the project. One thing I want to mention as a constant thought throughout the entire project is, “we cannot do that and be shy. We need to be exposed; we need to bring some press into this, to have people talk about it through articles and interviews”. That is the only way to get things legitimized. Until it’s out in the press, you’re not legitimized. It is like being a filmmaker and you have never sold a DVD. That’s Pascal Atuma telling me again, “Until you sell one single DVD, until someone can go to the store and pick up your DVD, you’re not quite there yet”.

So in closing, the loop of work to be done is going to fulfill my status as a filmmaker. *Hawa* is an opportunity to do just this. I am trying really hard to do everything that I can to complete that loop. Maybe *Hawa* will not be a DVD that is in a store, but at least I will secure the process so that it is familiar for me.

The value of immersing myself into accomplishing the full three year-program of RIT’s Film and Animation School has been exceptional in educating me. I would like to emphasize how the third year of applied knowledge after culminating two years of my education into a film work had far surpassed my learning goals. I’m looking at my fellow classmates and would like to say, “You can decide to get a degree, or you can decide to start a career.” I could have easily chosen the path of getting my degree. What that means is you do something that’s good enough and then you get your paper. Or you can decide to start a career and use education as an opportunity to get normal, touchable situations to

come to you as part of your education purpose. And it's safe! You can go all out in this broad playground, simulating every dynamic to better prepare you to go out there ready to build a career. If 10% of the community of RIT were aware of that, RIT would become a professional place, not a student place. This is the difference I felt, to work as in a professional place making a professional film, not a student place making a student film. I internalized my education and felt I've come far in becoming a filmmaker, a business man and overall a better husband and father for my family.

This last year taught me how to think on my feet, to stretch beyond to make my dreams a reality. It was an anticipated year. I was looking forward to it. I knew I would be exposed and I wanted to be exposed. It was my honor to be officially selected in the 2013 RIT Honor Show.

My elders taught me, 'you won't be acknowledged unless you earn it.' I did invest all my effort into my three years of study and the making of *Hawa* and I trust people will notice it. This is where I am going to do from now on, do things that count, things that matters so people will notice. Ultimately, *Hawa* was not just my MFA thesis film. It was me getting ready for a great carrier in the film industry.

WORKING WITH MY THESIS COMMITTEE

Every quarter I was meeting twice with my thesis committee which was composed of Brian Larson, Howard Lester and my chair Peter Kiwitt. The goal each time was to first set the goals of the quarter, discuss any difficulties, take suggestions and ask questions. The goals set represented a contract that I needed to have respected at the end of the quarter so that during our second quarterly meeting we evaluate together what was accomplished and what was left. It was always an interesting step because it helped me do the reality check before and after in order to keep things going.

APENDIX A: Screenplay HAWA

FINAL SCREENPLAY

HAWA

By

ARZOUMA AIME KOMPAORE

AN ORIGINAL IDEA

Draft10
copyright:
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Afree film Production
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INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

It is lunch time. All the tables are populated by mostly Caucasian American. Everything is clean and shining.

Some plates, perfectly balanced by expert hands, are carried between the tables and put on the counter at the end of the aisle.

Two woman's hands grab the plates and pass the door leading to the kitchen.

INT. RESTAURANT/KITCHEN - DAY

The hands dump the rest of food into a big garbage bag and pile the plate on the dish washing trailer. It is a busy time. People sweat and don't smile. The place contrasts with what we saw earlier inside the restaurant where everything is clean and shiny.

HAWA early 40s, African woman, grabs the garbage bag and goes outside to the dumpsters Like everybody else, she barely looks around her.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

As Hawa dumps the garbage, she hears some noise in the small aisle next to her. Hawa gives a quick look and spots a couple kisses passionately. She hides behind the wall and looks at the scene until a co-worker opens the kitchen's door. She looks away embarrassed and returns inside.

INT. KADER'S CAB - DAY

Eyes closed, heads in one hand, KADER, early 50s, African immigrant is asleep.

A few pieces of paper are stuck together with a rubber band against the sun visor. Next to the pile, an old picture of him in a surgeon's outfit.

A blond girl, fancily dressed, L'Oreal hair style, climbs in the cab listening to her cell phone.

BLOND

The airport please!

Kader comes back on earth. He uses a bottle of water to quickly wash his face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

2.

KADER
Departure?

BLOND
No, arrival.

Kader starts the the meter count, and turns on the radio.
Fingers tapping on the steer wheel Kader hums the lyrics
still waking up from his nap.

Near the window, a small bucket with nut shells in it. The
bag of nuts is next to the gear stick.

The music plays.

The blond girl, annoyed, pauses her phone conversation.

BLOND
Would you turn this down?

Kader spits a nut shell for all answer and closes the sun
visor. After she goes back to talking to the phone, he gives
a quick look into the mirror, and smiles condescendingly.

INT. AFRICAN BRAIDING SALON - DAY

The beauty shop is busy. Two women waits for their turn.
TINA, SANDRA, BIBICHE, gossip and braid like usual. Their
expert hand, braid, cut, and twist. Bibiche is he owner of
the Salon.

Her cell phone rings. She picks up the call and puts the
cell phone under her bra.

The scene is in french

BIBICHE
(In English)
Style Hair Braiding, this is
Bibiche...Yes, 6 PM?...Okay, see
ya!

From under her bra, she pulls out her cell phone, turns it
off and put it back.

Hawa enters the salon, wearing coat and hat. She is late.

BIBICHE
It's about time you showed off!
Your client's been waiting for

thirty minutes now, so hurry up!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

3.

HAWA

I know, I am sorry, the bus didn't
come in time.

She takes off coat and hat, and comes back to her unhappy
client.

HAWA

(in English)

Hi, sorry for making you wait.
kinky twist?

HAWA'S CLIENT

Yes.

HAWA

(in English)

And how are we doing today?

Hawa is already combing her client's hair with her fingers.

HAWA'S CLIENT

Could'a been better...

HAWA

(to Bibiche back to french)

Can you keep the keys this weekend?
I gotta sub at the restaurant...

BIBICHE

(shaking head)

Ask Tina. I am in New York City
this weekend.

HAWA

(baby face)

Tina?...

Hawa, ups her eyebrows,

Tina closes her eyes and nods.

TINA

(smiling, player)

I don't know...Maybe...Let's say
you cook me a delicious saga saga
plate like you know how...

Hawa smiles

HAWA
Consider it done honey!

Sandra spots a flyer in her client's hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

4.

SANDRA
(in English)
You dance zumba?

CLIENT WITH FLYER
(in English, enthusiastic)
This is Salsa. Here, you can have
it.

SANDRA
Salsa?.

Sandra takes the flyer and hands it over to Hawa.

Hawa shakes her head, not interested.

Hawa watches Tina grab the flyer from Sandra hand.

CLIENT WITH FLYER
(In English, persuasive, to
Sandra)
Are you married?

Sandra shakes her head.

CLIENT WITH FLYER
Or in a relationship? I'm telling
you, it's really good. It is
bringing new sparkles in your life.

TINA
(mocking Sandra)
You should totally go mingle with
single, miss single lady!?

Tina hands back the flyer to Sandra.

SANDRA
Me? No... I don't need to pay
anybody to dance salsa! I KNOW
Salsa!

She puts the flyer on the chair, steps back and executes
poor steps of salsa, encouraged by all the girls together.

They all laugh.

Hawa smiles.

BIBICHE

So you are coming right? for the party?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

5.

HAWA

Hum...it is not sure...I don't think so.

Bibiche shakes her head.

BIBICHE

You always like that, maybe maybe... change a little bit one day.

Hawa looks on he chair next to Sandra ignoring Bibiche.

INSERT - FLYER

HAWA GLANCES ONCE MORE AT THE FLYER LEFT ON THE CHAIR BY SANDRA.

INT. ANTIQUE STORE/FERTILITY ROOM - DAY

Red light in the room. Hawa stares at the fertility doll, put one hand on the doll's belly and the other hand on her own belly and starts rubbing both bellies.

She comes out of the little room, walks a short aisle, drops twenty buck in a big jar and leaves.

The clerk busy writing on papers behind the counter. He looks up on to of his glasses and goes back to writing.

EXT. HOME - DAY

Hawa walks towards her house carrying heavy grocery bags. In front of the door a small package has arrived from Africa, with her name on it.

INT. DINNER TABLE - NIGHT

Kader and Hawa eat pepper soup. Kader likes the food and

looks nowhere else but his plate. Hawa looks at him. They speak french to each other.

HAWA

How was your day?

Kader takes his time, drinks the rest of juice and notices Hawa waiting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

6.

KADER

A driver at the company had his toe amputated because of diabetes.

Hawa pours the few water left in a jug in Kader's glass and pushes two different set of pills in front of him. Two square pills and and two round ones.

Hawa gets more tap water.

HAWA

Does being a cab driver have to always come with a disease?

Kader takes the set of round pills and swallows them.

He touches the set of square pills on the table.

KADER

The taxi job itself is that unhealthy.

HAWA

(from the kitchen)

The Congolese party is tomorrow. Are we going?

He puts the square pills in the air.

KADER (CONTD)

One year. That's what they said right? And three years later, we are still putting all our money in these damn pills...

From the sink, Hawa looks over her shoulder first at pills then at Kader.

HAWA

Are we going?

KADER

No.

Hawa runs the water on the dishes.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Hawa is done cleaning the last plate. She dries her hands on her hips and sees the square pills on the table untouched.

7.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

BED SQUEAKING. Kader from behind, pumps and exhales loudly on top of Hawa.

Hawa looks at the ceiling with empty eyes. She looks at a picture of Kader and her, happy, holding each other in Africa.

INT. BEDROOM- DAY

A ray of sun comes through the window. Hawa is laid down still, with a thermometer in her mouth. She does not move at all. The thermometer beeps.

She grabs from the drawer a chart and circles a temperature measurement after what she puts the chart back in the drawer.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

JONAS

Alright now, everybody line up, get a partner. Women, let me see your frame.

There is about ten people in the room. Hawa is among them.

They all partner up. Hawa's partner looks particularly excited.

Jonas steps in front of one lady. Her partner steps back.

JONAS (CONTD)

(demonstrating)
In most Latin dance, leaders always
start with the left foot going
forward like that. The girls always
start with the right foot going
backwards like that. Okay?

He leaves the girl, her partner pairs up.

The other students in two lines, facing each other, pair up
as well except for Hawa who is still getting her frame
right.

Hawa's partner waits, already executing the steps alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

8.

JONAS (CONTD)
Six, seven, eight nine and...ONE,
TWO, THREE, ONE, TWO, THREE... Let
the leader lead! ONE, TWO, THREE,
ONE, TWO, THREE...

The student executes the steps.

Hands holding hands. Hands on back shoulder. Hands on hips.

Hawa sees all of that. Her partner finally frames with Her.
His excitement brings him very close to Hawa as she tries to
push him away.

JONAS (CONTD)
In Salsa, Bachata, or ball room
dance in general, the man is the
one who proposes the steps, and
leaves the choice to the woman to
decide whether she follows or not.

Suddenly, a big SLAP in a face cracks in the air. Hawa is
terribly embarrassed and freaked out.

HAWA
(to her partner)
Sorry, I am sorry...

She leaves the dance floor as her dance partner holds his
cheek.

Jonas runs after her.

JONAS
Anything wrong?

HAWA
(apologetically)
No, it's me. It is not for me.

JONAS
Don't say no to fun, say no to
drugs...come on, I know it's your
first time--

Before Jonas can add anything she is gone shaking head and hands.

9.

INT. CORNER STORE - DAY

Hawa buys one Africa prepaid calling card. She carries a few grocery bags.

INT. BUS - DAY

BUS DOORS OPENING. Somebody gets in and pays one buck. Hawa holds a scratched calling card in one hand and her cell phone in the other hand. A young couple holds each others hand. The girl is pregnant. Hawa converses in french with MOTHER KADER.

HAWA
Mother! I already told you! It is
not ME! The doctors are formal,
Kader is the one who needs to be
treated. They call it
necrozoospermia!

MOTHER KADER
...You have to follow the notes in
the package as you use the powders.

HAWA
Mother! Listen, I am perfectly
fine! Your son doesn't take his
fertility drugs, You gotta talk to
him...

MOTHER KADER
Take the powders! Don't disappoint
your husband. Don't disappoint me.

Desperate, Hawa ends up the call. The pregnant lady pulls out new baby-born shoes and shows them to the guy. The man kisses the pregnant belly.

INT. CAB - DAY

RADIO STATIC.

KADER
What happened to the airport guy?

DISPATCHER GUY (O.S.)
Somebody else got it.

KADER
Somebody else? What's wrong with
you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

10.

DISPATCHER GUY (O.S.)
I don't like your tone right there,
okay? I am doing my job, if you
don't like yours, quit!

The dispatcher hangs up.

Kader hangs up as well and bangs his two hands on the steer wheel, cursing in African language.

His hands start shaking.

From the glove compartment he takes a bottle and swallows two pills out of the bottle. He puts back the bottle next to the gear stick. The bottle has an emergency stamp on it. Kader exhales, feels better.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS

A- HAWA ROLLS DOWN THE LOIN CLOTH WRAPPED AROUND HER WAIST AND ADJUSTS THREE HIP-PERLS.

B- TWO TEE SPOON OF "TURAY" ARE POURED ON EMBERS IN A TERRACOTTA BOWL.

C- HAWA STANDS ON TOP OF THE TERRACOTTA BOWL LEGS SPREAD,
LETTING THE SMOKE FILL HER ENTIRE BODY. SHE SWEATS
ABUNDANTLY.

INT. HOME - DAY

From the window Hawa watches two kids playing outside. She
smiles and from the drawer she grabs her Basal body
Temperature chart. She draws a curve relaying all the
monthly measurement together. The last measurement reads 99ř
and is the highest pic.

She circles it and sits on the bed holding the chart close
to her heart.

She sings an African song about mother's love.

INT. MECHANIC SHOP - DAY

PHONE RINGS. Kader picks up his cellular and isolates
himself leaving ABEL, his friend mechanic alone as he
inspects the floor of a car hang in the air. Kader and
Hawa's conversation is in french.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

11.

KADER

Yes?

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Hawa is sitting on the bed talking into her cell phone

HAWA

...Are you done yet?

INTERCUT MECHANIC SHOP AND BEDROOM

KADER

No.

HAWA

.... Don't come late, it is "baby
day."

beat.

KADER

...Anything else?

HAWA
...No... That's all.

INT. MECHANIC SHOP - DAY

Kader hangs up and returns to Abel. They talk while Abel fixes the car.

KADER
Abel, when are you going back to Ethiopia

ABEL
Going back? Nooo! This is home for me now. You wanna go?

KADER
I am gonna go!

ABEL
Oh yeah? People give everything they have to come! You wanna go back in the insecurity? The corruption?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

12.

KADER
I had a good life there you know. I was a respected doctor, I had money, maids, cars! Here...

ABEL
You had all that but still you came.

KADER
Hawa won the green card lottery...you know, it's like we had a whole new life to start. The only thing is, we didn't know it starts from zero...

ABEL
This is America for for you brother, America is tough!...what about Hawa?

KADER
...She is a good African woman...I
know she misses back home too.

Abel gives him a sorry look and goes back to fixing the car floor.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS

A- THE PACKAGE SENT FROM AFRICA UNWRAPPED, LAYING ON THE TABLE. IN THE BACKGROUND HAWA IS SAT DOWN.

B- HAWA POURS TWO POWDERS, ONE RED AND ONE BLACK IN A CUP. SHE MIXES EVERYTHING TOGETHER WITH A LITTLE BIT OF WATER. SHE THEN POURS THE MIXTURE IN A POT OF YOGURT, AND EATS EVERYTHING.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS

A- A ROSARY IN TWO HANDS. HAWA IS KNELT DOWN NEXT TO THE BED, PRAYING.

B- HAWA, ALONE, TIRED OF WAITING. SHE STARES AT THE PACKAGES AND TERRACOTTA BOWL, FEELING LIKE AN IDIOT.

13.

INT. HOME - NIGHT

KEYS IN THE DOOR LOCK. Doors open. The shadow of a man standing at the door.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kader carefully enters the bedroom. Hawa lays down on the bed facing the other side of the room. She is awake.

After taking off his short, Kader sits on the bed and takes off socks and pants.

Hawa turns on the light. It is 02:00 AM

In french.

HAWA
You are late.

KADER
I picked up another shift.

Silence.

HAWA
(Eyes tearing up)
Fifteen years. All this time
dreaming of that kick inside my
belly. I don't want the same plates
no more, I want them broken,
children running around.

Kader slips in the bed giving her his back.

KADER
Baby, baby, baby! That's all you
have now?

HAWA
People look at me and talk in my
back. They think it is me!

KADER
Did we really come here for a baby?

Silence.

KADER
Go to bed, I am tired.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

14.

HAWA
You are always, tired.

Kader gives her a look.

KADER
Hey! where do you think you are? I
don't like your tone, woman.

HAWA
Then be a man! You think I am
having fun when you climb on me?

KADER
Shut your mouth, cursed snake! I'll

show you what it takes to be a man.

His hand freezes in the air as he stands up, looking down to her on the bed.

Hawa urns around and curls up on the bed, crying, silently.

KADER (CONTD)

This is what this country does to
you women, turn your mind. But
don't worry a few more month and we
are out of here.

Kader slams the door startling Hawa.

INT. CORNER STORE - DAY

Some fingers check calling card after calling card on the
shelf. Hawa looks at the undecided man in front of her.

She steps in front of Jonas and grabs one of the blue cards.

HAWA

(without really looking at
him)

The blue one gives you more time. I
always get that.

She turns around. and waits for Jonas to make some room.

A moment they recognize each other. He smiles, she looks
away embarrassed. She waits for Jonas to make some room.

Jonas steps back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

15.

HAWA (CONTD)

Sorry. Thank you.

JONAS

Thank you, you!

Jonas quickly grabs one blue card and follows Hawa in the
next aisle.

JONAS (CONTD)

So...where do you call with these
cards?

HAWA
Cameroon.

JONAS
Okay... that's what Cameroon people
look like...

Hawa smiles. Takes a moment.

HAWA
(smiling)
And where are you from?

JONAS
(proudly)
Brooklyn New York.

HAWA
I meant originally?

JONAS
Nigeria.

Hawa nods while checking an item.

JONAS (CONTD)
You should come to the studio
again.

Hawa is caught. Embarrassed. She doesn't dare looking at
him.

JONAS (CONTD)
Look, I know the first time was not
great, but come again. I'll give
you a free lesson. Okay? And say hi
to the people in Cameroon...

Jonas waves at her as he leaves .

Hawa finally looks up, thoughtful, interested.

16.

INT. AFRICAN BRAIDING SALON - DAY

Things are going slow today. Tina and Sandra braid the only
client of the day. A teenager is busy with her cell phone.
Next to her, the client's baby in a car seat.

Bibiche is busy checking her make up, leaning against the
counter.

Hawa looks outside through the windows. She looks sad.

Bibiche pulls a few lip glosses from her bag and joins the girl.

In French.

BIBICHE
(addressing the Tina and
Sandra)
Look what I have for you girls.
Brand new!

She gives one lip gloss to Sandra.

BIBICHE
Open it!

Sandra opens the lip gloss and two lights coming from the lip gloss itself illuminates her face.

SANDRA & TINA
Wow!

Bibiche smiles and after handing another lip gloss to Tina she head toward Hawa, still looking outside.

BIBICHE
(handing another lip gloss to
Hawa)
Hawa! try it!

She sits next to her

HAWA
(mouth corners lowered almost
disgusted)
No.

BIBICHE
(offended)
Oh that's right! Mrs I wear no
make-up huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

17.

HAWA
I just don't like it.

BIBICHE
How about your husband. Don't you
wanna be beautiful for him?

HAWA

He doesn't like it either.

Sandra jumps in, lips full of lip gloss.

SANDRA

That's what they all say, but they
are always checking out the ones
with make up.

Hawa doesn't like where this conversation is going. She
starts playing with the baby in the car seat.

BIBICHE

Hawa, You need to start putting you
first. Look around, this is
America, the land of the free!

SANDRA

That's right!

She Hi-fives Tina.

HAWA

Okay enough! I am a married woman,
and none of you is married. Am I
right?

She looks at Bibiche

HAWA (CONTD)

If you were, you'd know that you
always put the other first.

Bibiche, Sandra, and Tina look at each other, speechless,
sorry for Hawa.

BIBICHE

That's exactly what I used to
think, before I start tasting
life...

She goes back to the counter leaving Hawa alone.

18.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Hawa stands in front of the window, looking at the sunset,

thoughtful. She looks at her left hand, fingers after fingers.

She slowly slides down her hand down her pelvic area. Her eyes reads something between fear and curiosity. She startles and take her hand out.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Hawa turns off the water in the bathtub. She checks how warm is the water. She stands in front of the mirror and wears a bathing cap. She looks at herself and takes the bathing cap off.

INT. HOME - NIGHT

Living room. Kader is breaking some nuts with a nut breaker. Hawa comes in the background.

HAWA
(neutral)
The dinner is ready.

INT. DINNER TABLE - NIGHT

Kader sits down and notices the table is set for him only. He serves himself some of the food but stops once more to stare at Hawa's empty chair.

Kader cannot eat. He pushes his plate and heads for the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hawa is on the bed, watching an old TV show. She burst into laughter as Kader slowly opens the door.

She doesn't pay attention to him and keep enjoying the show.

Kader closes the doors back.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kader closes the door and stays there thinking.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

The class is done. The last students leave. Lights switch off.

Jonas stretches a little bit then start a solo.

Hawa walks in. She wears a nice summer dress under her coat. New hairstyle.

Jonas stops the music player.

HAWA

Is your offer still valid?

Jonas smiles, cleans the sweat on his face.

A finger pushes the play button. A Salsa rhythmic fills the room.

Jonas and Hawa step in facing each other. He lifts up his left hand and frames in front of Hawa.

JONAS

Put your middle finger against mine...

Hawa frames as well and touches his finger.

Jonas uses his middle finger to push Hawa's middle finger back and forth.

JONAS(Contd)

Dance is about feeling. You can feel when I push, I can feel when you push. Now, I propose a step...

He pushes her finger and moves his left foot forward at the same time.

JONAS (Contd)

You listen to the proposal...

She steps her right foot back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

20.

JONAS (CONTD)
And we agree together to finish the
step.

The both come back to the initial position.

JONAS (CONTD)
It's that simple. Okay? Let's try
it again.

Hawa nod and does her best to execute the steps with Jonas.

EXT/INT. AFRICAN BRAIDING SALON - NIGHT

Somebody waits outside the Braiding shop holding a rose. He
hides the rose in his back and enters. The girls are
surprised. Kader is all dressed up and looking sharp.

KADER
Hi!

SANDRA TINA AND BIBICHE
Hi!

KADER
(looking around)
Hawa is not here?

BIBICHE
...Hawa?...not yet!

TINA
(announcing the good news to
the other girls in French)
She called! She's at the dance
studio on Gregory street...

KADER
(in French)
Dance studio...?

Bibiche gives Tina such a deadly look she looks down,
embarrassed.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

21.

Hawa is now comfortable and they both combine steps after steps holding each other. She smiles and enjoys it. The music is beginning to feel good to Hawa.

A connection in the eyes. Hawa is a bit ashamed.

Jonas is a good teacher, he leads without leaving her.

JONAS

Nice! Where did you take some classes?

HAWA

I have never taking a class.

JONAS

Wow! You're a natural! Let's see what else you got.

Jonas changes the music from the iPod on the table. A Bachata rhythm pours.

Jonas holds Hawa in a slightly different framing. His eyes never wander from hers. A rising beat. Hawa smile, confident.

Jonas dances with her as if they have always been dance partners. They are holding each other close. Very close. After a sensual routine, Jonas grabs Hawa around the waist, pulls her to him in quick and precise spinning move. Caught off guard, all Hawa can do is throw her arms around his neck.

She feels something. They both do.

Breathing.

Hawa pinches the corner of her mouth. She tries to gets up and stumbles.

JONAS

Are you okay?

HAWA

I think I twisted my ankle.

JONAS

Hold on.

He leaves the dance floor.

Hawa sits on the floor. She is on another planet.

Jonas comes back with a first aid kit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

22.

JONAS

Do you mind?

He gently put one knee on the ground and puts Hawa's foot on the other one. From the kit he takes an anti-inflammatory gel and puts a little in his hand.

He rubs his hands together.

As soon as he touches Hawa's ankle she shivers.

JONAS

Sorry, did I hurt you?

Hawa shakes her head.

Jonas expert hands keep going back and forth on the foot.

Hawa's eyes can't look anywhere else but at Jonas. Soon, her face scares up as she shivers more and more.

KADER

(holding the rose in french)

Hawa?

She retracts her foot, grabs her purse and coat and heads toward the door where Kader is standing.

HAWA

I hurt my foot.

Kader walks towards Jonas who gets up.

KADER

(addressing Jonas
aggressively)

Who are you?

KADER (CONTD)

(ready to fight)

And who are you, you?

Kader and Jonas stare at each other for a second. Kader sees that Hawa is gone. He runs after Hawa, throwing the rose on the floor.

EXT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

Kader catches Hawa's arm and turns her around. In French.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

23.

KADER

What are you doing here? Who is
this guy?

HAWA

You're hurting me.

KADER

Who is this?

HAWA

It is nobody, it's the dance
instructor! Let me go!

Kader's eyes fill with rage. He pulls her towards the cab.

KADER

Get in the car, we are going back
home!

HAWA

No! Let me go!

She withdraws her arm, start walking away.

KADER

Come back here! The baby was just a
masquerade huh? So you can better
devote yourself to your dirty
affair isn't it?

HAWA

(tearing up)

You know what? I am fed up of you
whining all the time. I have it up
to here! I married a man, the only
thing that's left is a selfish
husband incapable of fighting for
his family.

KADER

(In African language)

Lord stop me before I do something
bad!

He opens the passenger door.

KADER
(In English)
I know what I saw...! Get in the
car! GET IN THAT CAR!

24.

Hawa freaks up. Can't talk.

She start walking in the empty street.

Kader slams the door and get in the car.

A car pulls in blocking him. He hits the honk frantic.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Hawa walks alone, tears filling her eyes.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

Jonas picks up the rose on the floor. The note reads: I am sorry.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Hawa turns around the corner and leans against the wall, crying.

INT. BATHROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY

Hawa turns off the water in the bathtub. She checks how warm is the water. She stands in front of the mirror and wears a bathing cap. She looks at herself and takes the bathing cap off.

Her eyes catch something in the mirror, her breast. She runs a finger around her nipples. From the mirror, a bible is in the corner in a small book case. She looks back to herself, grabs a towel and throws it on the bible.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Hawa scrolls down on the floor, crying her eyes out.

The cab headlights flash the wall with Hawa against it. She covers up her eyes with both hands. The car roars. Kader slams his foot against the accelerator. The cab rockets.

25.

INT. BATHROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY

Hawa's finger is now down her croup, she closes her eyes. Every thing she does is very slow, very careful.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The car approaches rapidly. Kader's face is between trance and craziness. He suddenly holds his chest. A sizzling pain.

INT. BATHROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY

Hawa's body tenses, she opens her eyes, huhhhhhh...

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Kader body tenses, his eyes widens, huhhhhh...

INT. BATHROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY

Hawa's breath is gone, she collapses on the floor, like dead.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

In the street from against the wall, Hawa stands up and faces the deadly car almost upon her. She is stronger, determined, peaceful. All sounds disappear. She closes her eyes.

The cab slows down, and finally stops.

Silence.

Hawa slowly opens her eyes. The scream of the cab's honk

fades in with every other sounds.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

Kader, head against the steering wheel, fights death. His hand reaches out to the glove compartment as he gasps something only him could understand.

He can only give a look at Hawa who opens the door, asking for help.

Hawa quickly opens the glove compartment and gives him his pills.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

26.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. HOME - DAY

Hawa and Kader are packing.

Hawa closes the last suitcase and looks at the empty room one last time.

Kader leaves the house.

EXT. HOME - DAY

Kader drags himself using a cane. A cab awaits.

Kader gets in.

Hawa gives him a small bag.

He ignores it.

HAWA
Have a safe trip...

Kader don't even gives her a look.

Hawa steps back and let the cab pull over.

She stays in the middle of the street a moment, then goes in the opposite direction, holding her own suitcase.

She is sad, but as she walks her face lights up. She smiles.

THE END.

APENDIX B: Thesis Proposal

THESIS PROPOSAL

HAWA

Presented by: Arzouma Kompaoré

Approved for submission by: Peter Kiwitt

May 4th, 2012

Synopsis:

Desperately looking for something different in her life, Hawa gathers her courage against her husband and her own beliefs, only to discover the independent woman she has become owes it to her own husband's death.

Treatment:

Late 30s **Hawa** lives a simple quiet life with her husband **Kader**, a bold cab driver disillusioned by years of services in a country that was supposed to bring him success and joy. He was a renowned surgeon in his home country many years ago. Despite Hawa's hard work to warm up a little bit of what is left of their 20 years of marriage, the only time they really share something together happens in the bedroom, but again, coldly and passionless, ruthless selfishness on one side, tasteless submission on the other.

To compensate the hole, Hawa opens herself to the world, and enjoys every single moments observing other people living their lives.

At the African braiding salon Hawa hears about a salsa dance class and all the fun she gets there every week. Hawa is not thrilled by Salsa dance but is nonetheless seduced by her own curiosity. The hairdresser agrees to invite her for next class.

The salsa dance session is intense, fun, and makes everybody sweat. The demo is beautiful and the 2 dancers seem on another planet. Hawa takes more details with **Jonas**, the teacher and promises to come back.

Hawa shares her intention to her husband Kader who hands her a stuck of bills for all answer. Hawa insists repeating her intention. Kader replies he is not paying for something that is only going to pervert her. Hawa replies there are no perversions in dancing salsa and reveals that the infertility program reimbursed the money after he decided to stop his treatment. Kader kicks the table breaking a few plates on the way, and reminds her she has no right to touch this money. His blood pressure raises and he stumbles, dizzy. Hawa reaches for his medicine on the table. Hawa doesn't push the discussion further even though she will not give up this time.

Among the group of dancers, Hawa is literally another woman, twirling and twirling and twirling... But she is extremely sensitive and trembles every time a partner holds her hand or her waist, or gets to close.

Jonas slowly makes Hawa relax, slides in her back and holds her by her waist and step by step she learns how to convert each contact into new pleasures. She twists her ankle and Jonas offers to massage it. His expert hands on Hawa's foot set off an intense pleasure in her. As she feels something growing within her, intense and unstoppable she pulls her foot back and leaves in hurry. But she cannot stop thinking about what just happened.

This night, she feels all passers-by sights as if they knew something she was trying to hide. Guilt starts to grow in her as she gets home and she can't look Kader in the eyes when he asks her where she was to be that late. She does not confirm coming from the dance class but does not deny either. Kader shatters the newspaper in his hands.

The next day after the Salsa course Hawa waits outside to talk to Jonas about what happened and why she left that way. Jonas says he is glad she came back and that she is a very beautiful woman. He gets closer to her and kisses her. A few seconds later, gathering back herself she stops him and looks all around, like she felt someone looking.

Driving by with a client, Kader sees the entire scene from his cab but cannot stop due to too much traffic. When he finally stops they are gone. He urges the client to get out, wild with anger.

Hawa is home. Her husband is not there yet. She stares at herself in the bathroom mirror. She undresses and runs a bath for herself.

That same night Kader drinks whiskey at a bar, not sure of what to think about what he saw earlier happening between his wife and the stranger. In that same bar he recognizes Jonas getting a beer. When Jonas leaves the bar, Kader follows him.

Jonas reaches his car in an almost empty parking lot when car lights blind him. The car engine roars. He feels the danger.

She looks happy, tired, but her eyes catch something in the mirror, her breast. She runs a finger around her nipples.

Back in the street, Jonas is running away from the deadly car that chases him, jumping over all sorts of stuff crying help out loud in vain for the engine roar cover his voice.

Hawa's finger is now down her croup, she closes her eyes. But she immediately opens them back. From the mirror, a bible is in the corner in a small book case. She grabs a towel and throws it on the bible.

Jonas is trips, and falls down. Terrified, he begs whoever it is to let him go. Nothing but the engine roars. In a last round, the car rushes after Jonas as he screams.

Hawa's body tenses, she opens her eyes, climaxes, then collapses on the floor, like dead.

Slowly Jonas opens the eyes; the car is still in front of him, honk screaming. Slowly his ears can hear back. After a long moment, he gets up and run while the honk screams. In the car, Kader, head on the steering wheel, dead.

Hawa wakes up when the phone rings. Her eyes read something terrible.

A few months later, at the public market, Hawa looks different, ten years younger. She gives a candy to a little boy, and keeps walking, looking at the products exposed. Somebody pokes her in the back. Surprised she trips down a falls flat on her butt. She recognizes Jonas the salsa teacher. He apologizes and helps her stand up. He asks her why she never came back at the salsa club. She smiles and turns over waving to a seller. Jonas follows her.

THE END.

Rational:

HAWA talks about sexuality and couple life, self-discovery and sensuality. It is an exploration of the woman resolved to free herself against a heavy social heritage in which traditional culture continues to impact on aspects of sexuality, and sex restricted to family life. Hawa is the story of a personal growth from the complacent acceptance of religion and traditional ethos perpetrating men dominance over women in all matters, to the clear affirmation of an independent sexual desire.

In my film sound theory class I wrote a paper on healing sounds in movies. I focused my interest on the tangible, physical aspects of healing sounds and their characteristic (frequency, tonality, acoustic energy, mode of transmission etc.) as used in movies. One goal making HAWA is to explore more the healing power of certain type of sounds.

Lastly, narratives have always been endless sources of inspiration for human beings. From Aristotle to Jean-Pierre Bekolo, millions interpretations have been made as to what is the best way to create a story that works. On the other hand, the way my grandma or any other woman that knows a bit of my lineage welcomes me every time I visit her is in its own a very effective way to communicate with me the joy, importance, meaning, responsibility that come with who I am and where I come from. What originality can I find in it? This thesis work is not only an attempt to paint the complexity of sexuality in a couple but it is also a workshop to discover storytelling. Playing with story structures, emotions and symbolism with no fear to break some rules, that's how I want to approach this project.

HAWA TIMELINE	SUMMER			FALL										WINTER										SPRING									
	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	##	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	##	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	##
PRE PRODUCTION																																	
Production Script																																	
Fundraising																																	
Crew Hiring																																	
Location Scouting																																	
Casting Call																																	
Rehearsal Workshop																																	
Production Meeting																																	
Storyboarding																																	
Releases & Permits																																	
PRODUCTION																																	
Shooting																																	
Rough CUT1																																	
Re-Shoots																																	
Rough CUT2																																	
Music composing and recording																																	
POST PRODUCTION																																	
Editing																																	
Foley Sounds recording																																	
ADR																																	
Compositing																																	
Color Grading																																	
Mixing																																	
Final CUT/ Export																																	

Budget

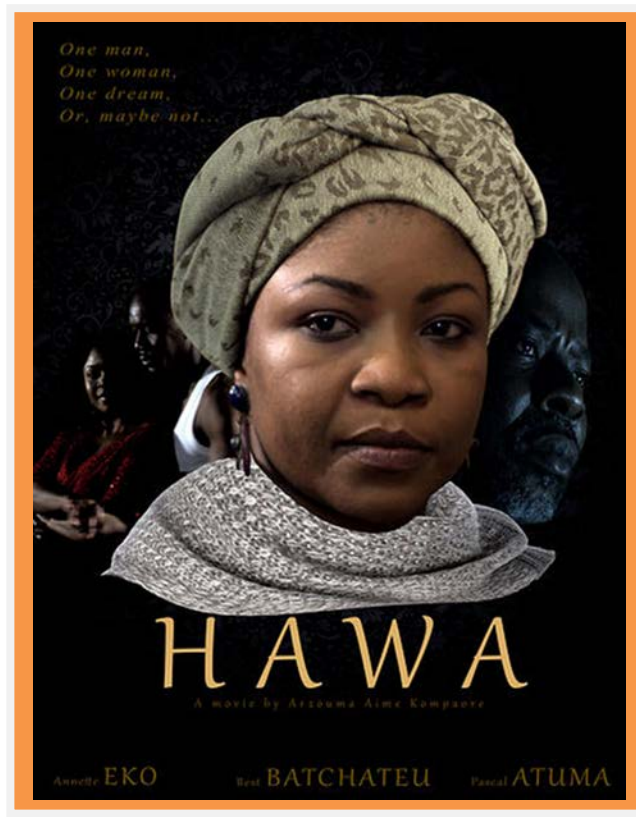
HAWA BUDGET	UNIT	RATE	SUBTOTAL	IN-KIND	CASH
PRE-PRODUCTION					
Transportation (gas)	10 travels	\$100	\$1000		\$1000
Props and accessories	Picture frames, special wardrobes, etc	\$700	\$700		\$700
Pre-Production Sub. Total			\$1700		\$1700
PRODUCTION					
Equipment (RIT)	Camera, lights, tripods, dolly, etc (Package)			IN-KIND	
Meal	15 days	\$200	\$3000		\$3000
Travel exp. for crew	10 days	\$30	\$300		\$300
Licenses, permits & insurance	2	\$150	\$300		\$300
Production Subtotal			\$3600		\$3600
POST-PRODUCTION					
Composer	2	\$400	\$800		\$800
Equipment (RIT)	Edit suites, Foley room, ADR, etc.			IN-KIND	

Post-Production Sub. Total			\$800		\$800
DISTRIBUTION & MARKETING					
DVD Duplication	100	\$2	\$200		\$200
DVD Booklet Printing, Labels and promotional material	Conception & prints	\$100	\$100		\$100
Festival Entry Fees	5	\$50	\$250		\$250
Distribution & Marketing Subtotal			\$550		\$550
GRAND TOTAL			\$6650		\$6650

APENDIX C: Business Plan

HAWA

THE MOVIE LLC CREATIVE & BUSINESS PLAN



Arzouma Kompaore

kzarmou@yahoo.fr

May 2012

With great enthusiasm, we present to you a project of remarkable scope and potential.
Hawa is a film unique in its vision.

Rational

Women, since we can remember, have always fought for their voice to be heard, for their place to be more than what social heritage tends to give them. Till today, traditional culture continues to impact on aspects of life, imposing the married woman to serve as role model to the kids and minister to her husband needs despite all odds. As a result, many engage in the trial to stretch outside this circle, redefining what it means to be beautiful, from the inside-out or from the outside-in, or better, they launch on the journey of discovering themselves.

No matter how educated or how westernized, for a good number of African women, sexuality seems to have always had a narrow connection with something bloody, painful, full of anxiety or unpleasurable even though it is, at the end of the days, the only thing we, as human beings, cannot lie ourselves about for so long.

“HAWA” is a drama that is a warm depiction of a woman’s journey from self sacrifice to self realization, from dependence to independence. A personal journey about growth from the complacent acceptance of religion and traditional ethos perpetrating men dominance over women in all matters, to the clear affirmation of a life fully lived through liberation of sexuality.

Synopsis

When Hawa realizes getting a baby is no more a priority for her infertile husband Kader, she not only starts to question the purpose of their fifteen years of marriage, but ultimately, what was in there for her. The only time they really sharing something together only happened in the bedroom, but again, coldly and passionless, ruthless selfishness on one side, tasteless submission on the other. **Hawa’s life** takes a surprising turn when she crosses the line and touches the forbidden fruit, her body. Nothing is like it used to be after that, and Hawa discovers a new passion: Salsa. As she recalls the intriguing incident, she gets new perspectives on the meaning of a life fully lived. Now trapped between who she is and who she could be Hawa has to make a choice. One woman. One man. One dream. Or, maybe not...

Style

Hawa will be shot on 16.9 on HD format, and run approximately 30 minutes. The audience will be swept into the energetic, and emotion driven visuals brought by the liveliness of salsa dance, the sincerity of an ordinary woman that is irreversibly inquisitive about her new sensuality.

We will approach the filmmaking style with informed and cinematic eyes. Our entire team will employ standard cinematic techniques such as dolly shots, jibs, steady-cam, coupled to more contemporary handheld shots used to emulate an “action feel” and a “dramatic feel”. Such style gives the story an intimacy, allowing us to feel truly present in each stimulating moment. We will match our photography style to the demands of the story. Our overarching commitment is to remain close to the story in a way that powerfully captures the life of our characters.

Success factors

Typically, an independent film has limited prospects beyond a theatrical release and ancillary market distribution. However, due to the growing popularity of women movement for their rights and the many thematic elements, this project has tremendous opportunities including episodic television, education and stage.

The film's marketability comes not just from the strength of the story or the artistic talent we've employed. *Hawa* touches on themes resonant in our society in the current moment – immigration, woman independence, sexuality in the couple,, cultural heritage and traditional values. We will be targeting an African American market as well as an African immigrant market, a growing demographic consumption market in the U.S. tapping into the fast and growing Nollywood industry. Like a 2010 UNESCO report stated, the Nollywood industry (N for Nigeria) produced approximately 2400 movies in front of Bollywood (B for Bombay in India) and Hollywood itself. That is another reason we are bringing in Nollywood award winning Actor Pascal Atuma in the cast.

On a larger scale since almost every family at one point had its first generation of immigrant in the States, many people will respond to a film about them, made by them. We also will have the help of talented New York City musicians along with a coming of age young artist from Buffalo and Rochester to create a hip, marketable soundtrack.

Once the film is complete, we will begin the distribution final stage of *Hawa* to national and international audiences. We will sell and license rights to *Hawa* to distribution companies, ensuring that it will be seen by the greatest number of people and thus have the greatest financial success. Selling or licensing rights is the typical manner in which a small film finds a wider audience. *Hawa* will be in line with successful independent cinema of the past, mimicking strategies used by box-office hits such as Dee Rees *Pariah*.

Our strategy for achieving maximum distribution is twofold. One of the best channels is the annual festival circuit. Events such as the Sundance Film Festival, Toronto Film Festival, Cannes Film Festival, and Pan-African Film Festival of Ouagadougou receive the best independent films each year and exhibit them to audiences, press, and distributors. These events provide a chance for new works to be noticed and picked up by distribution companies, who are on the prowl for sleeper hits. *Pariah* is a recent film festival entry whose originality got it noticed by a production company, and launched the film to national success. We are confident that *Hawa* will attract attention at these festivals.

The appetite for independent film is enormous. Rental giant Netflix has just created an entire department devoted to independent cinema, and indie hits such as *Juno* are among the most popular films in recent memory. We will secure favorable distribution in the pay-per-view, on-demand, and rental markets.

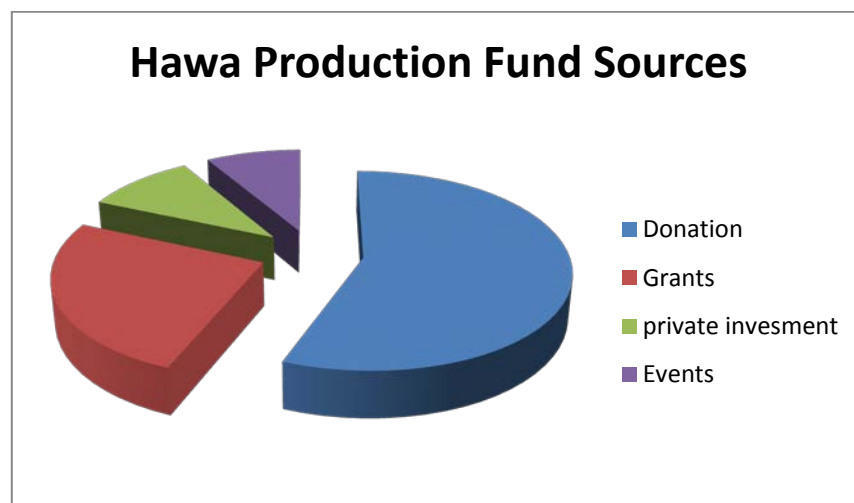
Additional revenue opportunities are available through such ancillary markets as merchandising and licensing, music rights, airlines, product placement, etc., and from foreign markets. All of these rights can be licensed individually.

Finally, *Hawa* will be packaged with DVD bonuses for the educational and group markets and made accessible to universities for educational purposes.

We estimate the total production cost of *Hawa* to be fifteen thousand dollars (\$17000)

We intend to fund the production of *Hawa* by the following means:

- **Private Investment.**
- **Grants.** *Hawa* may qualify for educational sponsorships, allowing us to apply for production grants from a variety of foundations.
- **Donations.** The generosity of community members, local businesses, friends and family continues to support production of our project. Crow funding through websites such kick starter or indiegogo is available.
- **Benefits & Events.** The producers will work with marketing agencies and publicists to throw hip, marketable events for the film and raise production funds.



OPERATIONS

In order to ensure the financial security of our investors, the producers formed a Limited Liability Company: Hawa Films, LLC. This production company will not only guide the making of the film, but will maintain all necessary administrative and financial records. Producer and Managing Member of Kompaore Productions, LLC will serve as the entity's registered agent for the service of process. The address for the entity's registered agent is 64 Crittenden Way suite 6, Rochester NY 14623.

STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

STRENGTH WEAKNESS OPPORTUNITY THREAT		Type of Factor	
		Favorable	Unfavorable
Location of Factor	Internal	<p>. Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letters of interest based on thematic elements from divers organizations dealing with women liberation - Experienced creative crew with extensive knowledge on filmmaking and distribution circuits, especially the universities and educational institutions as well as the specialized TV stations for short movies - The African / Nollywood niche - The cast is entirely made of professionals both from stages and sets. - Film-friendly locations with many laws and politics making easy to make movies in the Buffalo/Rochester area. - Award winning actor Pascal Atuma 	<p>. Weakness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short movies have limited audience - Small budget - Hard to have pre-buy - Hard to penetrate the US market with international independent movies
	External	<p>. Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Episodic TV - Stage - Book - Educational channel - Award winning piece - Submitted in partial fulfillment of the Director's MFA - Growing interest for short movies 	<p>. Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evolving audiences - Some thematic element could become irrelevant many year later. - Cast availability - Illness of the key crew members

FINANCIALS

Startup cost:

HAWA PRODUCTION BUDGET							
SEPT 17th 2012							
A Short film shot on RED							
Running Time: 30 min.							
Based on a 14 days shooting schedule and a 5 weeks editing schedule.							
		QTY		UNITS	FEE	COST	TOTAL
A. SCRIPT & STORY							
	Story & Script		2	EACH		0,00	
	Duplication		20	COPY	2,00	40,00	
	Postage		1	ESTIM	25,00	25,00	
	Storyboarding		1	ESTIM		0,00	
	Copyright		1	FLAT	50,00	50,00	115,00
B. TALENT							
	Line Producer/UPM		1	FLAT		0,00	
	Director		1	FLAT		0,00	
	ACTORS						
	Lead		8	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Lead		6	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Lead		3	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Big Name Star		3	DAY	1500,00	4500,00	
	Support #1		2	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Support #2		2	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Supporting Cast		3	FLAT	0,00	0,00	4500,00
C. PRODUCTION PERSONNEL							
	Cinematographer		14	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	1st Camera Assistant		14	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	2nd Camera Assistant		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Audio Person		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Boom Operator		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Production Manager		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Assistant Director		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Associate Producer		4	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Art Director/Props		14	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Set Dresser		4	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Key Grip		14	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Grip	1	14	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Gaffer		14	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Makeup		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Stunt Coordinator		0	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Special Effects Person		0	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Clapper/Continuity		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Production Assistants	2	14	DAY	0,00	0,00	0,00
D. LOCATION EXPENSES							

	Meals	20	14	DAY	15,00	4200,00	
	Motel	1	4	DAY	100,00	400,00	
	Location Fees		6	ESTIM	50,00	300,00	
	Transportation	1	3	ESTIM	20,00	60,00	
	Production Trailer		0	ESTIM	0,00	0,00	
	Mileage/Fuel		1000	MILES	1,00	1000,00	
	Electricity/Permits		1	ESTIM	200,00	200,00	
	Petty Cash		1	ESTIM	100,00	100,00	6260,00
E.	FIELD EQUIPMENT						
	Camera Package		14	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	2nd Unit Camera Package		0	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Camera Support		0	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Camera Supplies		1	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Sound Gear		14	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Grip Package		14	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Lighting Equipment		14	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Misc. Lighting		5	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Generator		3	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	SteadyCam & Operator		3	DAY	100,00	300,00	
	Dolly		6	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Crane/Jib		4	DAY	0,00	0,00	
	Props		1	ESTIM	250,00	250,00	
	Wardrobe		1	ESTIM	250,00	250,00	
	Expendables		1	ESTIM	200,00	200,00	
	Picture Vehicles		1	ESTIM	150,00	150,00	
	Set Construction		1	ESTIM	0,00	0,00	
	Special Effects		1	ESTIM	0,00	0,00	
	Makeup Supplies		1	ESTIM	150,00	150,00	1300,00
G.	RAW STOCK AND LABS						
	Negative		0	FEET	0,00	0,00	
	Developing(Free)		0	FEET	0,00	0,00	
	Workprinting		0	FEET	0,00	0,00	
	Audio Stock(DAT)		0	CASS	0,00	0,00	
	Still Photography					0,00	
	Color		1	ESTIM	0,00	0,00	
	Black & White		0	ROLL	0,00	0,00	
	Processing		0	ROLL	0,00	0,00	
	Instant Film		0	PACK	0,00	0,00	0,00
H.	SOUND AND MUSIC						
	Sound Designer		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Composer		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Recording Studio		16	HOURL	0,00	0,00	
	Equipment Rental		1	WEEK	0,00	0,00	
	Music Mix		24	HOURL	0,00	0,00	

	Sound Mix		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Audio Stock		0	ROLL	0,00	0,00	
	Musicians/Instruments		0	HOURL	0,00	0,00	
	Syncing		0	HOURL	0,00	0,00	
	Transfer Costs		0	HOURL	0,00	0,00	
	Composer's Digital Copy		0	FLAT	0,00	0,00	0,00
I.	GRAPHICS & TITLES						
	Graphic Designer		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Artist & Supplies		1	ESTIM	0,00	0,00	
	Titles		1	ESTIM	0,00	0,00	
	Optical Photography		0	FLAT	0,00	0,00	0,00
J.	EDITING & FINISHING						
	Editor		5	WEEK	0,00	0,00	
	Assistant Editor		0	WEEK	0,00	0,00	
	One Lite Video Transfer		0	FEET	0,00	0,00	
	Answer Print	1	0	FEET	0,00	0,00	
	Negative Cutting		0	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Release Prints	1	0	FEET	0,00	0,00	
	On-Line		0	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Film to Video Transfer		0	HOURL	0,00	0,00	
	Transfer Stock		0	TAPE	0,00	0,00	
	Editing Supplies		1	FLAT	500,00	500,00	
	Master Tape Stock		1	DRIVE	250,00	250,00	
	Dubbing		1	ESTIM	0,00	0,00	750,00
K.	OFFICE						
	Office Space		1	ESTIM	0,00	0,00	
	Production Insurance		1	FLAT	1200,00	1200,00	
	Accounting Fees		1	FLAT	0,00	0,00	
	Telephone		1	ESTIM	300,00	300,00	
	Duplication		1	ESTIM	200,00	200,00	
	Postage/Shipping		1	ESTIM	200,00	200,00	1900,00
	TOTAL						14825,00
L.	LEGAL FEES		0,04			593,00	
N.	INSURANCE		0,03			444,75	
M.	CONTINGENCY		0,10			1482,50	
	SUB-TOTAL						2520,25
	GRAND TOTAL						17345,25

Please contact Arzouma Kompaore at (585)755 9013 or kzarmou@yahoo.fr for information.

APENDIX D: History of Nollywood

Pascal Atuma :“**Nollywood: The Eagle of African Cinema-A Filmmaker’s Perspective**”.

Brief History of Nollywood

The term “**Nollywood**” refers to the video film industry of Nigeria, just as Hollywood refers to America and Bollywood to India. The history of Nigerian film Industry can be traced back to the 1960s when people like **Francis Oladele** and **Hubert Ogunde** started turning indigenous plays into films, but their efforts were frustrated by the high cost of film production. In the 1960s and 70s, Nigeria had very few cinemas, which were run by foreigners who were mainly from Lebanon with few Europeans. The few players were **Roxy**, **Metro**, and **Glover** Cinemas broadcasting more of Chinese, Indians and European contents. However, television broadcasting in Nigeria began in the 1960s and received much government support in its early years. By the mid-1980s, every state had its own broadcasting station. To encourage the then young industry, laws were enacted to limit foreign television content and convince producers in Lagos that local popular theater productions were the best alternatives. Many of these productions were circulated on video, which marked the birth of a small scale informal video movie trade.

The people were hungry for local contents and their prayers were answered during the first administration of **General Olusegun Obasanjo** as the Nigerian military head of state. He wanted to project Nigerian cultures, which led to the hosting of “**The Festival of Arts & Culture**” (**FESTAC**) in Lagos. General Obasanjo demanded that foreign owners give up 40% of theater control and transfer ownership to Nigerians. As a result, foreign theatre owners sold their entire theaters to locals. The new owners, however, lacked the financial prowess and international connections to keep up with the foreign contents. In addition, insecurity and armed robbery crippled night live and led to the collapse of the Nigerian cinema culture. At the same time, numerous new churches emerged and most of the cinema structures were converted into places of worship.

As the cinemas ceased to exist, Nigerian filmmakers like **Chief Eddie Ugboma**, **Ade Love**, **Ola Balogun** and others explored new opportunities, which led to a shift toward television soaps and dramas. Eddie Ugboma changed the style of the traditional theater to film and began making movies revolving around present day stories. His film “**OYENUSI**”, the story of the most notorious armed robber in Nigeria who was killed by a firing squad, was followed by **Jab Adu’s** “Bisi, the daughter of the River”, and sponsored by the late **Chief M.K.O Abiola**.

Chief Eddie Ugboma and his contemporaries ran the cinema scene for many years from the late 1970s to the mid 1980s, alongside the television soaps and dramas like “**Village Headmaster**”, “**Mirror in the Sun**”, “**Cockcrow at Dawn**”, “**New Masquerade**” and “**Checkmate**” produced by **Zeb Ejiro**, to mention a few. The success of the soaps and dramas resulted in the birth of the Eagle of African Cinema today called “**NOLLYWOOD**”

The Birth of Nollywood

An electronics importer by name of **Kenneth Nnebue** imported VHS tapes from China. When he couldn't sell the tapes, he contacted television producers **Okey Oguejiofor** to suggest alternative usage. They decided to write a script and Chris Obi-Rapu directed what became the first major local film, “**LIVING IN BONDAGE**”. The production and distribution of this film on VHS tapes marked the beginning of the first generation of “**NOLLYWOOD**”. The tremendous success of this film set the pace for others and led to the production of Domitila, Nneka the Pretty Serpent, and later, Osuofia in London by **Kingsley Ogoro**, which became a huge success, starring one of the biggest

names in Hollywood, **Nkem Owoh** as **Osuofia**. Through the business instincts and ethnic links of the Igbo and their dominance in the distribution of electronics in major cities across Nigeria and other parts of Africa, home videos began to reach people across the country. Nollywood exploded into a booming industry that pushed foreign media off the shelves and became an industry now celebrated all over Africa and the rest of the world.

Nollywood will face a lot of challenges, ranging from piracy and lack of funds to social and cultural challenges, such as religious and cultural beliefs. Most parents, under cultural and religious influence, oppose their children's participation in the industry, citing corruption and celebrity lifestyles which most African cultures do not openly embrace. But piracy will go on to be the greatest challenge until this day.

The young industry will go on to produce many notable stars in directing, writing, acting and producing. People like **Lancelot Imaseun, Jeta Amata, Tchidi Chikere, Teco Benson, Izu Ojukwu, Genevieve Nnaji, Omotola Jalade Ekeinde, Emem Isong, Ramsey Nouah, Jim Iyke, Desmond Elliot, Austin "Sharp Sharp" Ndukwe, Patience Ozokwo, Ini Edo, Stephanie Okereke, Rita Dominic, Tonto Dikeh, Mercy Johnson**, and many others. These names will grow to become household names in Africa. Others will transcend the shores of Africa to become ambassadors outside the continent with appearances on the Oprah Winfrey show and CNN.

The success of Nollywood in Nigeria gave birth to "NOLLYWOOD USA", which is where people like **Tony Abulu, Bethels Agomuoh, Don Okolo, Joy Orie aka Joy the Jungle Bunny, George Kalu, Seun Maduka, Rex Otuka, Eefy Ify Ike, Chet Anekwe, Bola Adelekan, Dee Dabira, Oscar Atuma** (my producing partner who is also my coconut head brother), **Boyce Uboh, Fred Idika, Roy Madu, Stanley Chinedu** not excluding myself and others would become "The Children of Nollywood" operating in the USA. We are referred to as "NOLLYWOOD USA"

The first Nollywood USA movie, titled "Back to Africa", was produced by Mr. Tony Abulu, followed by **Bethel Agomuoh's** film titled "A mile to Canaan", and then Don Okolo's film "**419-The Stock Exchange**". Nollywood USA movies enjoy wide distribution in America, Canada and the Caribbean by Sanga Entertainment, operated by **Mr. Rabi** Mohammed as the only distributor of African films in America back then, now we have more distributors like Executive Image, Franco Films, Angelcom etc. Then came the new wave when Nollywood America's film "**Only in America**" produced by me and my partner **David Decrane** was picked up by Maverick's Entertainment, Miami for mainstream distribution worldwide. From here Nollywood America went on to enjoy mainstream distributions for movies like "**Crazy like a Fox**" (**Tony Abulu**), and "**Hurricane in the Rose Garden**" (**Pascal Atuma & Jeremy Scroggins**). Most recent Nollywood USA Movies that really shook the market include "American Dream", "**My American Nurse 1**", "**My American Nurse 2**" and many more set to go to distribution this year, such as "**Okoto the Messenger**", "**The Other Side of Love**", "**Faithfulness**", "**This is Houston**", "**Who is the Man?**" and others.

The Eagle

The growth and success of Nollywood transformed African cinema and its history. Most people that didn't know about Africa have familiarized themselves with Africa by watching Nollywood and other African films like those of Ousmane Sembene from Senegal, Adam Drabo from Guinea, Abdusalam Mumuni from Ghana, and several films out of the South African film industry. Nollywood films in recent years have enjoyed success at International film festivals like The **Pan African Film Festival, Black Harvest International Film Festival, Fespaco**, and many more.

As the Eagle flies, Nollywood has single-handedly helped to clean up the negative image of Nigeria in the Western media, as well as that of Africa. Before the emergence of Nollywood films, much of the western world thought that Africans lived on tree tops and walked the streets naked. Many felt that cars, houses, hospitals and all that good stuff were not available in Africa. I have met a lot of foreigners who still have the impression that Africa is just a country. I remember one of my school mates in theater school asking me “Pascal , what is the name of the capital of Africa?” I just looked at her and shook my head because she didn’t know that Africa is not a country but a continent. From most of the documentaries produced by Nollywood, a person like my schoolmate now knows something about the history of Africa.

Nollywood is the second-biggest film industry in the world after Bollywood in terms of output and is the second-largest employer in Nigeria. The success of Nollywood has influenced other African countries to start building their own film industries, like **Ghanawood** (Ghana Film Industry), **Camwood** (Cameroon Film Industry) , **Kenwood**(Kenya Film Industry) just to mention a few. Ghana, for example, is beginning to enjoy success like Nollywood around the world, and, through the interjection of some Nollywood stars, have built their own stars like **Majid Michaels, Van Vicker, John Dumelo, Vida Darko, Yvonne Nelson, Jackie Appiah** and many others.

In the last few years, the emergence of **Silver Bird Cinema**, operated by the Bruce brothers in Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya, have led to the second coming of cinema culture in Nigeria and Africa as a whole. The success of Chinazeze Anyane’s movie “**IJE**” and **Stephanie Okereke’s** film “**Through the Glass**” confirms that the new Nollywood will be able to produce enough content to sustain these cinemas. Foreign contents will soon become a subsidy to African movies because of the audience already built by the Nollywood DVD and VHS market.

In conclusion, the future of African cinema is as bright as the eagle is willing and poised to fly. From all indications, the Eagle of African Cinema called “**Nollywood**” has come to stay, and its future is limitless. As a baby industry, we are open to collaborating with the Western world and a partnership with UCLA will surely be beneficial to both parties, which is why I am extending such invitation to UCLA, on behalf of Nollywood. We have a project which will soon take off and UCLA is welcome to work together with us.

Light at the end of the Tunnel

The current president of Nigeria, President **Goodluck Ebele Jonathan**, has committed to take Nollywood to higher grounds by building the “**Abuja Film Village**”. Abuja Film Village is designed to attract infrastructures that will make Abuja “The world Center of Film and Entertainment Excellence”. Under the leadership of **Segun Oyekunle** as the MD/CEO, Abuja Film Village will raise the professional know- how of the Nigerian Film Industry. To affirm his commitment and support to Nollywood, **President Goodluck Jonathan** is releasing a \$200 million loan to the Film Industry for interesting film projects. I can sincerely affirm that there has never been a better time for meaningful partnership between UCLA and Nollywood as we are ready to raise Nollywood to new heights.

Thanks to UCLA, the state of California and the United States of America as well. Thanks to **Claudia Hoffmann** for contacting me, **Sheila Breeding** for handling all the paperwork, my agent **Warren Beatty, AAB Talent**, Toronto, Canada, my manager and beloved brother **Oscar Atuma**, my publicist **Ngozi Mba**, the president of the Film Makers Association of Nigeria “**Mr. Tony Abulu**” for helping me with this speech, and last but not the least, The Nigerian Chamber of Commerce, USA.

God bless America, God bless Nigeria, God bless and guide Nollywood, God bless Africa, God bless the children of Africa and God bless you all. Thanks."

References:

www.afreefilm.com